

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

LEVEL
ONE

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September 1, 1954

APPEAL FOR HELP ON JAPANESE POPULATION PROBLEM GOES TO EVANSTON

A "Statement on Japanese Migration" was drawn up at the August 9 meeting of the International Affairs Commission of the NCC and forwarded to the World Council meeting at Evanston. The statement, which is reprinted below, will form the basis for an appeal to the World Council to encourage the opening of closed-doors to Refugee-immigrant and assist the newly arrived emigrants in their countries of resettlement. The original draft for the statement was drawn up at a "Consultation on the Population Problem and Japanese Migration" held at the instigation of the WCC Dept. of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees (now the Japan International Christian Service Committee) in Tokyo. The idea was then passed to the NCC for action. Among the members of the International Affairs Commission were Mr. Kensuke Horinouchi, former ambassador to the USA and chairman of the Commission; Mr. Komakichi Matsuoka a Councilor of Social Democratic Party; Mr. Tamotsu Hasegawa, and Mr. Junzo Sasamori both members of the Diet; and Mr. Daisuke Takei, Christian business man.

STATEMENT ON JAPANESE MIGRATION

By the National Christian Council of Japan

It is a well-known fact that Japan has the highest concentration of population in proportion to arable land of any country in the world. In addition to losing her entire overseas territory, with its immense economic resources as well as having suffered severe internal war losses, 6,279,106 persons have been repatriated to Japan since the war.

It is estimated that on July 1, 1954, Japan's population stood at 88,000,000, an increase of 16 million over 1954. These figures become increasingly fearful when it is realized that this steady rise in population is not withstanding a steep drop in the birth rate during the post-war years. From the peak of 34 births per 1000 in 1947, the birth rate drooped to 23 in 1952 and to 21 in 1953, a decrease of 38% in eight years. This steadily decreasing birth rate is due to some extent to the slump in the war marriage boom but principally to legalized abortion and propaganda for family limitation. It is estimated that in 1954, 1,000,000 abortions were performed legally. This fact shows how the Japanese have realized that unlimited increase of the population will cause social and economic disorder and also will be an obstacle to world peace.

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Along with the decreasing birth rate, the drop in the post-war death rate has been amazing. Efficient public health measures, the welfare work under the Allied occupation, as well as the application of sulfa drugs and penicillin has resulted in the death rate dropping from 17 deaths per 1,000 in 1946 to 9 per 1,000 in 1953. The excess of births over deaths, or the natural rate of increase in population in Japan during 1953 was 12 per 1,000. This represents a decrease of population increase of 3.6 per 1,000 since 1951. It is interesting to note that America's natural rate of increase in population stood 14.8 per 1,000 in 1951.

Nevertheless, even at this present increasingly low rate of population increase, Japan's population will reach 100 million between 1968 and 1970.

Though there is no one single solution to this population problem, we would invite the attention of the world Christian community to migrational opportunities for Japanese people.

We are aware of the anxiety of certain countries over the settlement of large numbers of Japanese within their borders. We call attention to the fact that the post-war Japan is not the militaristic, imperialistic nation of the pre-war period. We also believe that the groups of Japanese living in the United States and other countries have proved to be good citizens, contributing materially to the economic welfare of the countries where they have lived and certainly having much lower incidence of crime and pauperism than the average citizens of the countries in which they live.

We bespeak the assistance of Christian people around the world in facilitating the immigration of desirable persons to such countries as will welcome them; and insofar as is possible and appropriate, we hope the World Council of Churches will investigate possible areas for Japanese emigration, assist repatriated Japanese refugees who wish to emigrate and assist in sending Christian pastors to serve such emigrants.

In view of the fact that there are among the 6,279,106 repatriates resident in Japan, hundreds of thousands in acute economic distress due to the loss of their former farms and homes, and the impossibility of finding employment in the cities where industrially unemployed already numbers ten million, any assistance to these persons can be truly called "service to refugees".

KYODAN CENTENARY CAMPAIGN CONFERENCE HELD AT NIKKO

A blueprint for the Kyodan centenary campaign was drawn up at the Nikko conference of district evangelism committee and special committee chairmen. This plan will be presented to the biennial meeting of the Kyodan in October for approval. Main points of the campaign for the local churches will include: a mass evangelism campaign to include factories, hospitals, prisons, etc.; a concerted effort to make the gospel facts known to more people, and to strengthen the church; campaigns to foster regular attendance and increased giving by church members, home worship programs and visitation evangelism campaigns by church members.

For the Kyodan as a whole, the committee outlined a 3 point program as follows: A survey of evangelical work so a better overall strategy can be worked out, publication of special literature; special attention to rural missions, including fostering cooperation between city churches and

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rural churches.

VISITATION EVANGELISM TRAINING CONFERENCE HELD AT TOZANSO

150 people attended a training conference for visitation evangelism volunteers at Tozanso, Gotemba on Aug. 7-9. Plans were made to publish both a newspaper and a guide book for volunteers in the movement which is rapidly gathering strength in Japan. First introduced by Dr. H.H. McConnell NCCCUSA specialist in visitation evangelism in 1951, these campaigns have been growing in popularity and are filling a vital need for more grass roots evangelism in Japan.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION SPONSORS CONFERENCES

Christian educators had the opportunity to attend two conferences this summer at Tozanso under the auspices of the Christian Education Association. The first, from July 26-28, was the 4th annual Religious Education "refresher Conference", which was centered on the theme "The Bible and Education". Dr. Hidenobu Kuwata, president of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary was chairman, and the other lecturers were the Rev. Isao Fukushima, pastor of Ogikubo Church, Dr. Jisaburo Matsuki professor of Kansai Gakuin, and the Rev. Takeshi Takasaki pastor of the Asagaya Church. Discussion centered on the difficulty present day students of are having understanding the miracles of the Bible, and their feeling of conflict between science and religion. The students' concern for social problems, especially rearmament and the world peace problem was also emphasized. The educators affirmed that the truth of the Bible must always be the foundation and student must be led to solutions to these problems from this beginning.

The second conference was the 24th Summer School for teachers of Christian school on July 28-31. About 220 from over 60 schools attended the meetings whose theme was "The Faith of Christian Educators". Dr. Tooru Matsumoto of Meiji Gakuin, and Dr. Katsumi Matsumura of Kansai Gakuin were special lecturers. They emphasized that in Christian teachers faith, personality and scholarship must be combined so that they can carry out the "mission" of the Christian schools. The necessity for a more intimate relationship between churches and schools was also brought out.

INTERNATIONAL WORK CAMPERS PREPARE CEMETERY; LAND FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN

International work campers at Hiroshima worked to prepare ground for a Christian cemetery, the 1000 tsubo of land having been contributed by the Laymen's Association of Hiroshima. Campers included 1 Canadian, 1 Okinawan, 3 Americans and 15 Japanese. Many of the campers attended the first funeral at the new cemetery, that of 2 criminals who had been converted and baptized while awaiting the death penalty in prison.

The work of campers at Izu Aziro to prepare the ground for a Welfare Institute of Underprivileged Children proved so difficult due to hard rocky soil that the base commander at Yokosuka had to come to the rescue with 2 bulldozers and dynamite. Another months work remains to be done at this site. This work camp was directed by an American, Mr. Ester.

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LACOUR REPORTS ON 2 MONTH CAMPAIGN IN FUKUSHIMA

Interest in Christianity is still high in Fukushima, according to the report on the 2 month evangelistic campaign of the Lacour Evangelical Band. The Rev. Lawrence Lacour made the report at a farewell tea held in honor of the group by the NCC on August 27. Lacour reported that from 25-75 persons attended meetings regularly at each of the 10 centers which were picked for intensive evangelization. There were 46 baptisms in the 2 month and 120 more are in the process of preparing for baptism. An average of 1/4 of the population of the towns in which the centers were established attended at least 1 meeting of the group. The people living in the neighborhood of the campaign centers seemed very cordial and pleased that Christian groups were to be established there.

A 1 year evangelical plan was laid out for each center, and either a pastor or student pastor was left in charge of each of the "embryo churches. When the churches are established, they will affiliate with established denominations of their choice. It is probable that most of them will become Kyodan churches. Lacour emphasized that the aim of his group had not been to try to set up a new denomination, as had been charged by some uninformed sources.

Lacour felt that the setting up of regular Christian fellowships in each of these 10 places, even though some of the groups are still small in number, had more than justified the intensive campaign. He feels the challenge of a mission to Japan more than ever after this year's work, he emphasized and hopes to return next year for another intensive campaign in a different area. He said that the total cost of this years campaign had been about \$25,000.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL WORK FEDERATION HOLDS CONFERENCE AT YUGASHIMA

40 social workers attended the 6th annual meeting of the Christian Social Work Federation held on the Izu Peninsula, Yugashima, from August 18-20. The main topic of discussion was the relationship between the church and social work. This problem is especially acute in Japan, since the church itself is financially unable to take the responsibility for social work, and the 2 tend to become separated.

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MALIK AND DAGADU SPEAK TO THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR AFRICA AND ASIA
(Ecumenical Press Service report)

Dr. Charles Malik, Lebanese delegate to the U.N. and the Rev. P.K. Dagadu, General Secretary of the Christian Council of the Gold Coast spoke for Asia and Africa to the World Council meeting at Evanston when they addressed the Plenary Session on the subject "Asia and Africa Ask Search Questions". Mr. Dagadu pointed out that the concept of Africa as a "dark continent" is an outmoded one, and that Africans today demanding a place of equality with other peoples they are challenging Christians to live up to their Christian social ethics and to heal their own divisions as an example of the unity of Christ and the brotherhood of man.

Dr. Malik contended that the intellectual and spiritual problems of Asia and Africa are far more important than the political, social and economic problems. "Communism can never be opposed in Asia and Africa as a mere negation", Dr. Malik said, "A positive message of hope is needed. Dr. Malik warned that if the present rate of spiritual impotence continues it is only a matter of time before the whole of Asia and Africa and may be even Europe will be engulfed by Communism. Dr. Malik concluded with "Communism exposes the inadequacy of the Western-imperialistic and smug-Christian approach of the past. Something infinitely more humble more profound, ... something touching the hearts of men and their need for fellowship and love.... something providing them with real hope for themselves and their children in this life and the next, something of this order is needed. This Something is Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord."

THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE WORK DONE BY THE COMMITTEE DURING THE YEAR 1911.

The committee has been very busy during the year, and has accomplished much work. It has held several public hearings, and has received many suggestions from the public. It has also held many private hearings, and has received many suggestions from the public. It has also held many private hearings, and has received many suggestions from the public.

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